

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Nature's Path Foods USA

Impact Washington

Nature's Path Foods Conserves Energy and Reduces Waste

Client Profile:

Nature's Path Foods, Inc., founded in 1985, manufactures specialty cereal products for the organic foods market. Nature's Path Foods' products are sold through on-line stores and retailers internationally. The company's facility in Blaine, Washington employs 90 people.

Situation:

Nature's Path Foods was experiencing concern about the environmental impact of their manufacturing process and considering long-term sustainability issues. The company contacted Impact Washington, formerly known as Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance in identifying opportunities to reduce energy and wastewater and improve its long-term sustainability efforts.

Solution:

Impact Washington led a Value Stream Map (VSM) project which was cosponsored by EPA's Green Supplier Network (GSN) and the Washington State Department of Ecology Hazardous Waste Toxics Reduction Unit. This partnership worked to bring together several programs that could help Nature's Path address its environmental concerns. Through the VSM event, Impact Washington identified several areas for improvement in overall energy usage and wastewater disposal. Impact Washington then contacted partner organizations with expertise in these areas. The Washington State Department of Ecology brought in two energy partners, the University of Washington (UW) Industrial Assessment Center and the Washington State University (WSU) Energy Extension Office, which identified multiple energy conservation opportunities. The Department of Ecology's TREE (Technical Resources for Engineering Efficiency) Team is working with Nature's Path to address wastewater issues that have linkages to their boiler operation. Through the VSM and subsequent projects, the company has a better picture of the facility's wastewater characterization needed to secure future wastewater permits. In addition, Impact Washington assisted Nature's Path in locating the appropriate contacts at a sister agency in Wisconsin to help them identify energy efficiency considerations during the design phase for their new plant.

Results:

- * Anticipated energy savings of \$144,000 per year.
- * Potential savings of \$11,000 to \$48,000 per year for wastewater disposal.

Testimonial:

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